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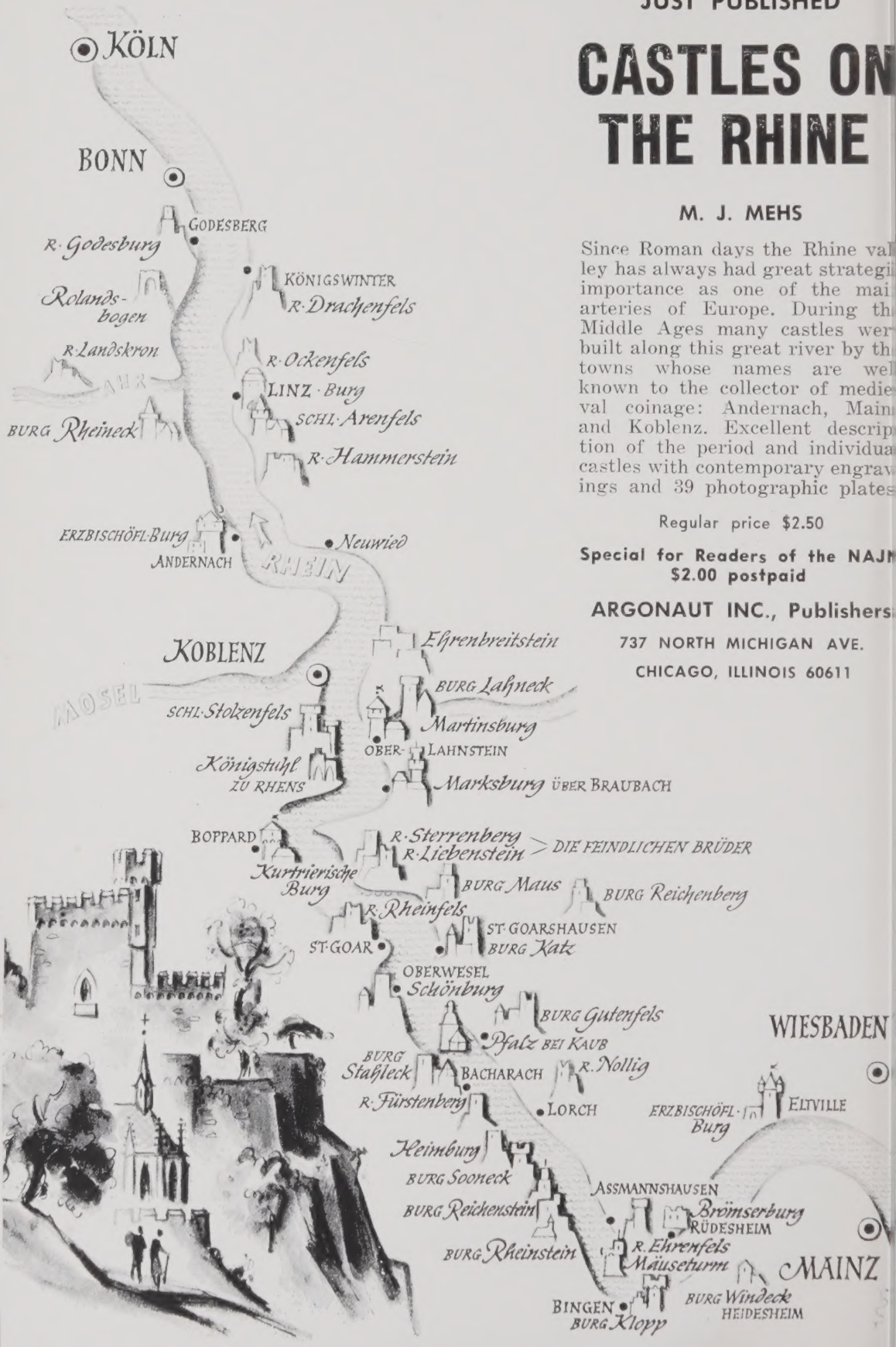

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Helike: The Lost Greek City Known From Only One Coin-type

by Al. N. Oikonomides

Two thousand three hundred and thirty nine years from the time that a severe underwater earthquake and the ensuing tidal wave caused the city of Helike to disappear under the waters of the Mediterranean (373 B.C.), the name appeared in headlines of the world press. The lost city has been, since 1966, the center of a search by an international team of scientists and archaeologists who, armed with the most developed methods of underwater research, are trying to locate its exact site in the gulf of Corinth.

Inscription

ΕΛΙΚ *(retrog.)*

City Badge

For a long time it has been the dream of classical archaeologists to search the bottom of the Mediterranean for the lost treasures of classical antiquity. Helike, is just one of the most noteworthy cases of an entire city which disappeared in a few hours of a stormy night. The ancient writers who reported the disaster are quite clear about the fact that no one survived. The city of Helike, with all its buildings, temples and population, was totally submerged under the tidal wave and lies still somewhere at the bottom of the Gulf of Corinth at a possible depth of 45 to 60 feet below the surface.

To numismatists Helike is known as a "one coin type" city. Only two bronzes seem to have escaped the disaster and found their way into numismatic cabinets of European museums. The better preserved of these specimens is that in the National Museum of Berlin (Fig. 1) and since it is rarely illustrated or

commented upon, perhaps it will be useful to analyze both its obverse and reverse types.

The obverse illustrates the head of Poseidon, the great god of the sea. From the ancient writers, we know that Helike was the center of a very old Ionian cult which worshipped the Helikonian Poseidon. The revered old statue of the god was housed in the most prominent temple of the city and pilgrims from all over the Greek world went regularly to Helike to offer dedications and sacrifices to the almighty protector of Ionian trade and colonization. So it is quite logical to assume the the head of the famous statue may have become the god protector's head on the coins of Helike, exactly as other bronze statues of gods and goddesses became the originals for the divine heads illustrated on the obverses of coins issued by other cities of the Greek world.

Stylistically, although the miniature copy of the head of Poseidon on the coin of Helike does not permit many stylistic observations about the art of the original, we may say almost positively that it appears to be more like a copy from an archaic statue than from a work of the classical period of sculpture. The primitive representation of the hair locks, the rough and short beard and the trapezoidal cheeks are features which appear constantly in archaic sculptures. The form of the letters of the legend ELIK (starting retrograde almost at the level of the eyes in Poseidon's profile) appear to suggest either that in Helike the Ionian letter forms had not yet replaced the archaic ones when the coin was struck (prior to 373 B.C.) or that conservatism was the personal style of the die cutter who, in this case, must be considered as having produced a miniature very close to the archaic features of the original statue.

The reverse of the coin is occupied by a laurel wreath in which the trident of Poseidon appears in the center flanked by two dolphins. Since symbols of gods having on either side animals, mythological monsters or plants are among the most common of the city crest forms originating in the Mycenaean period, we must have little doubt that thanks to the one known coin we have learned possibly what the official crest of the submerged city was. As for the assumption that the origins of Helike can be dated as far back as the Mycenaean period, this can happily be verified by Homer (Iliad *ii*, 575) where Helike is mentioned as one of the cities which belonged to the Mycenaean kingdom of Agamemnon, and further as one of the cities "*beloved to Poseidon*" (Iliad *viii*, 203).

Strange as it seems, the unique coin type of Helike is almost

unknown and is rarely used in numismatic and archaeological publications. Its first publication goes back as far as 1880 (*Zeitschrift für Numismatik* VII, p. 365, Pl. 8, 6) and the commentary of Weil is not the best possible for its proper numismatic and archaeological evaluation. Weil believes that the features of Poseidon are "*classical*" and "*similar to the Poseidon by Pheidias on the east frieze of the Parthenon.*" Any student of classical sculpture can refute this statement by merely glancing at the coin.

The geographer Eratosthenes of Cyrene (276-196 B.C.) who visited and was shown the site of the submerged Helike, possibly from a small boat, was told by the ferry-man that there was "*a bronze statue of Poseidon, standing erect and holding a hippo-campus in his hand which was a real danger for those who fished with nets.*" Was it or was it not a product of the boatman's imagination? In any case, it must be considered a fact that the cult statue of Poseidon, if not destroyed by the earthquake, awaits archaeologists to discover it. And we may also suppose that even this statue may not be the most valuable thing to be found among the ruins of the city.

For members of the numismatic family, the forthcoming underwater searches for the exact location of the submerged Helike, present a rich field of expectations. Since in most underwater excavations to date coins have been found, it is not unreasonable to suppose that coins will come from the site of Helike. A city which was a well known trading center and port from the archaic period onward must preserve among its ruins, not only unknown coin types produced in the local mint, but also great numbers of coins from other Greek cities (10 visiting Spartan warships were lost with the city) which may not be known from other specimens.

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The Ephemeral Reign of Ardashir III and His Coins

RAYMOND J. HEBERT

With the death of Kavadh II in 628 A.D., the Sassanid throne passed to his seven-year old son, Ardashir III, who was elevated to the throne by the first chief of the kitchen or khvansalar, Mah-Adhur-Gushnasp. This person acted as his tutor but was in fact the regent.

However, a rival lord, Farukhan Shahrvaraz, "*the wild boar of the Empire,*" also known as Rumizan, not wanting to take orders from one he considered an equal, advanced against the capital, Ctesiphon, with his army, in concert with the Byzantine Heraclius I, with whom he had made an arrangement to evacuate Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor, as well as to pay him a sum of money. In addition, the two families had been united by a double marriage.

At Ctesiphon, two of the great lords, Niv-Khusru, chief of the young king's guard, and Namdar Gushnasp, general or spahbadh of Nimruz, gave Farukhan their support when he arrived. He entered the city and had the young ruler executed, the latter having sat on the throne only one year and six months.

Because of his ephemeral "reign," his coins are by no means common. He struck drachms with at least five mint signatures and bearing the dates one and two.

The coin illustrating this sketch weighs 3.51 gr., and has a diameter of 31.5 mm. It was struck at Bishapur (mint signature [See No. 1] *BISH* to the right of the fire altar on the reverse) in the year two ([See No. 2] *TRIN* to the left of the altar). The obverse legends are "*May (he) increase!*" ([See No. 3] *AFZUT)* to the left of the beardless bust of the king, and "Ardashir," the king's name ([See No. 4] *ARTASHTR)* to the right.

Notes on the Ancient Coinage of the Axumites

By Joseph J. Spelican

The coins struck by the kings of Axum between 200 and 1000 A.D. represent one of the most unique, but little known, sources attesting to the rise and fall of the most civilized among the ancient kingdoms of the eastern portion of the African continent.

We have known of the existence of Axumite coins now for nearly a century and a half, but since almost all of the numismatic material collected has been reserved for the study of a few specialists, there is merit in dedicating a short introduction on the numismatics of Axum for the benefit of the many non-specialists.

The subject is so difficult and so vast that we are obliged to entrust to the photographs the major descriptive tasks for the few pieces of Axumite coinage which we were able to accumulate from various museums, and we have been forced to forego the usual technical numismatic information except where it is truly indispensable.

The first thing that we must note is that the coins issued in Axum were the products of regular state mintings produced during the reigns of the various kings, the names of whom appear on the coins. As we have already noted the period during which coins were issued is very long, covering nearly 800 years! The metals used for the various types were gold, silver and bronze.

The inscriptions which surround the busts of the kings is usually in Greek. As an example the inscription is given here from a gold coin of the earliest king known to us from Axumite coinage, *Endybis.*

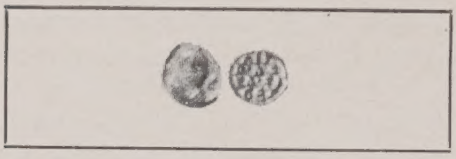
Obverse: ΕΝΔΥΒΙΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ *Endybis king.*
Reverse : ΑΞΩΜΙΤΩΝ ΒΙΣΙΔΑΧΥ *of the Axumites from the tribe(?) of Decuen*

The use of Greek is due to the fact that for a long time this language was the international commercial tongue; the one with a universal character such as English may be called today.

A characteristic of Axumite coins is that the inscription is divided in the middle by the religious symbol which may be the star and crescent, or, after the conversion of the Axumites to Christianity, the cross, which appears directly

over the helmet or crown of the king. The heraldic sign of an ear of corn is also present on many coins and always on the gold ones.

It appears that the Axumites also used coins issued by the ancient state of Yemen when they conquered this country around 250 A.D. thanks to the efforts of their warrior king, Afilas. *Afilas* is the second Axumite king whose coins are known and his name (or surname adopted by him when he rose to the throne) may possibly be interpreted etymologically as *"the one without friends."* The coins of this king are among the most beautiful of the Axumite series and among them one of the most remarkable is a very small gold coin



m. The small gold coin of the king *Afilas [ca. 235-286 A.D.]* weighing only 1/32 gm. (only two specimens known).

weighing only 1/32 grams. Generally all the Axumite coins are of small diameter rarely exceeding the regular size of 16 mm.

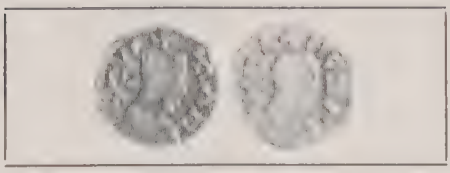
It is important to note that although the Axumite kings who issued coins known to us so far are more or less 25, the various types known to date are nearly 80.

Some other names of Axumite kings? Here is a partial list: *Ousanas, Vazebah, Ezanas, Kaleb, Alla Amidas, Nezana, Ebana, Israel, Armah, Gioel, Vazenas* and *Hataz,* who presently closes the series. It must be noted here that many kings took the same names as one of their predecessors when they ascended the throne; thus we have coins of the pagan *Ousanas* and the Christian *Ousanas* who ruled many centuries after the first. This case is repeated with *Hataz* and another, according to what the study of the coins reveals with the assistance of other historical data, as, for example, the fact that some royal names are of biblical origin.

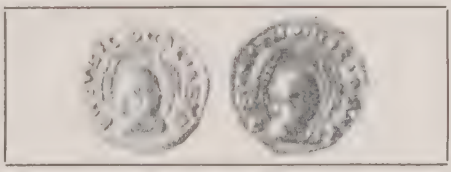
The history of Axumite numismatics has long been the subject of many learned publications, but even today it constitutes a fertile field for the student of Ethiopian antiquity, because without fear of overevaluating them, we can affirm that the coins of Axum are noble products of numismatic art, and among the most ancient of them appear some small masterpieces.

There are several silver and bronze Axumite coins giving evidence of goldplating, a process which took place after the regular minting. This certainly required such a technological

a. Silver coin of the king *Kaleb* (The "Constantine the Great" of Ethiopia) [ca. *525 A.D.*]



b. Gold coin of the king *Endybis* [ca. *227-235 A.D.*]



c. Bronze coin of king *Ezanas,* [*ca. 320-325 A.D.*] with the ear of corn. (To the right is the bust of the king, not distinguishable because of the bad state of preservation of the specimen)

d. Silver coin of the pagan king *Uazebah [ca. 317-320 A.D.*]

e. Silver coin of the king *Armah, [ca. Seventh c. A.D.]* the Axumite king who corresponded with the prophet Mohammed (570-632).

f. Two coins issued by the mysterious king *Za-Abyio La-Mahden* known to us only from his coins.

knowledge of this special use of gold as to leave us perplexed, or even astounded.

As we have already mentioned, the symbols which appear on the coins are the star and crescent later the cross, and the ear of corn which appears to be a symbol representing abundance or fortune in the heraldry of the Axumites. Also, on the coins issued near the end of the Axumite kingdom, it is not unusual to meet the cross and the crescent on the same coin. On a silver coin of the king Armah, the ear of corn, the crescent and the cross all appear on the same flan.

These are only a few of the peculiarities appearing on the coins of Axum which make them very interesting, and as a result very precious to numismatists and collectors.

Little by little, as the area of the kingdom of Axum became isolated by the tide of invading Islam, the surrounding territories belonging to it were lost (and this made it impossible to continue or further promote the necessary commerce) so the quality of the coins issued declined. The last Axumite coins show very rough manufacturing characteristics, but are equally beautiful really, from this special character of extreme roughness.

We must not forget, above all, that thanks to the coins rediscovered in Axum, and especially because of them, it is possible to learn some historical names, the records of which would have been otherwise completely lost (who was Endybis of the race of the Dacuens?) And the systematic study of Axumite numismatics continues to provide a valuable track for he who will learn how to follow it, especially when archaeological exploration is able, in time, to provide some other useful finds which, together with the numismatic evidence, will succeed in illuminating greatly or completely some of the many little known and unexplored sides of the ancient history of Ethiopia.

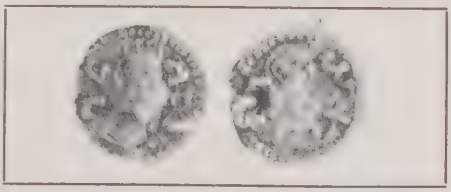
[Translated from the Italian text published in *Etiopia Illustrata* IV (1965, December by Augustino Crespi]

Axum was a kingdom which flourished in the first or second century A.D. and was at one time co-extensive with modern Ethiopia, plus a portion of the south west coast of the Red Sea as well as some tribal Arab property on the opposite shore. Its main cities were Axum and Adule. The Axumitae were originally a pure Ethiopian race with a small amount of Arab blood, although in the kingdom's decline the latter seem to have become predominate. Greek was spoken in Axum, evidently as a result of Greek trading throughout Africa after the establishment of the Macedonian dynasty in Egypt. The ruins of the city of Axum are extensive and are still be be seen as one of the major attractions of Ethiopia.

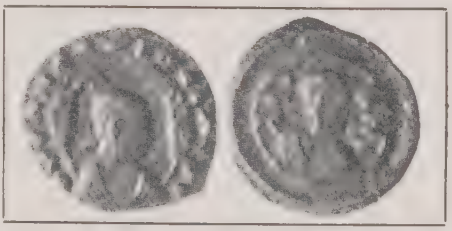
g. Gold coin of the king *Nazanas [ca. Sixth c. A.D.]*

h. Bronze coin of the king *Afilas* with ear of corn on the reverse *[ca. 235-286 A.D.]*

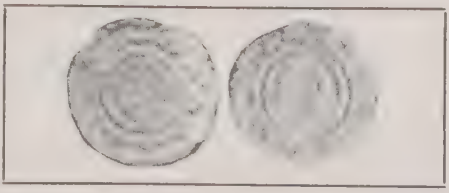
i. Silver coin of the king *Endybis.* (Note the details of the large necklace and the earrings) *[ca. 227-235 A.D.]*



k. Silver coin of the king *Ghersem* with small crescent on the left side of the cross appearing on the reverse *[ca. eighth c. A.D.]*



l. Unpublished bronze coin of the pagan king *Ousanas [ca. 286-317 A.D.]*



n. Recently discovered gold coin of the king *Alla Amidas,* a king known to us only from his coins *[ca. seventh c. A.D.]*

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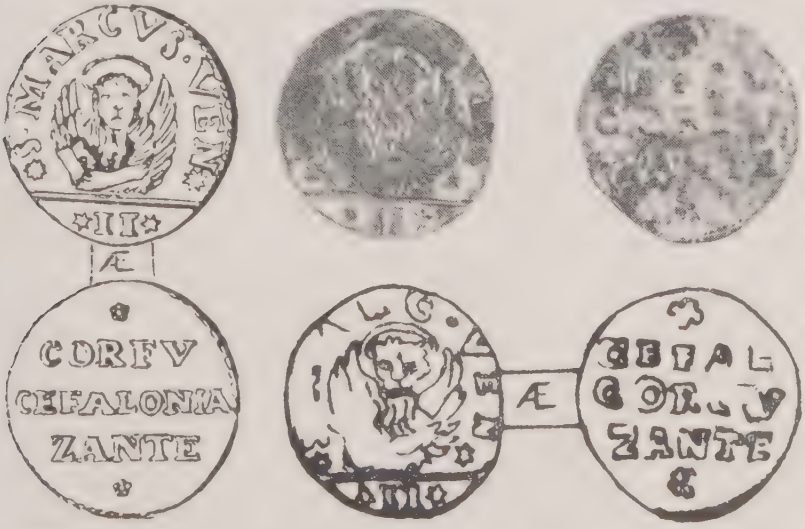
An Unpublished Type of Gazetta Issued During the Venetian Rule of the Ionian Islands (ca. 1730-1797)

by S. Gardiakos

The bronze coinage of the Venetian occupation of the Ionian Islands remains to this day one of the least known areas of modern numismatics. To my knowledge there is not even one numismatic catalogue or price list which provides an adequate record of all the known types of these coins, except of course the monograph by Paul Lambros which was translated into English and published a year ago in the *NAJN*.[1] It becomes apparent that if we want to see soon those coins used for the numismatic documentation of this not well known historical period, we must study and examine all the specimens available to us which might complete the listing of types in the effort at cataloguing made by Lambros.

I am happy to report that I was able to add to my collection, after a long search, a type of Gazetta from this period, which from the references I was able to check, appears to be a completely unknown type. The condition of the specimen does not allow its publication only by means of a photograph, so a line drawing of both obverse and reverse has been added.



(Fig. 1). For the sake of comparison of the new type on the obverse and the variation in the inscription on the reverse, I have also added the drawing which Lambros considered to be representative of the 17 types of Gazetta listed in his paper.[2]

Obverse: *[S. MAR] C. VEN* Radiated sejant lion (seated with forepaws in air) facing, holding book of Gospel. In the exergue *II* for the value (=2 soldi).
Reverse: CEFAL/CORFU/ZANTE. (In 3 lines. Rosette above the first line and below the third).

The inscription of the obverse is the same as type 14 in the list of Lambros.[3] However, the lion type is completely different in conception and size than that illustrated by Lambros and appears to be more like that of the *Dalmatia et Albania gazetta* and those of the Free Ionian Islands.[4]

The inscription on the reverse is the first variation known, which disturbs the idea that the order *Corfu, Cephalonia, Zante* was typical of the gazettas issued by the Venetians for the Ionian Islands. The 17 types listed by Lambros all follow the known order and their distinction is possible only by abbreviations of the island names used by the die engravers. A suspicion that this order was not the unique one used, was supported until now by four types of soldi (Lambros, 25-28) following the order *Corfu, Zante, Cephaolonia.* From the new specimen of gazetta which is the unique one of all known types of gazettas or soldi which has the order *Cephalonia, Corfu, Zante*, we may now assume the existence of a larger number of inscriptions and order varieties. Specimens of these may exist unpublished in museums and private collections and perhaps also in lists of hurriedly catalogued auctions.

Among the possibly existent but unpublished types we should logically expect one gazetta corresponding to the order *Corfu, Zante, Cephalonia* (known in four variations of soldi listed by Lambros, cf. above) and at least one soldo with the order *Cephalonia, Corfu, Zante* which becomes known for the first time from the specimen here published.

Since I am continuing my search for the completion of the list of missing types, I should like to hear from any fellow numismatist who has in his possession one or more of the unknown varieties of these coins. A rubbing or cast would be sufficient. Please address any communications to S. Gardiakos, 821 S. Waller, Chicago, Ill. 60644.

1. Lambros, Paul. "The coins of the Islands Corfu, Cephalonia and Zante issued Under Venetian Rule ca. 1730-1797" in *North American Journal of Numismatics* 5, 1967, pp. 25-30.
2. Lambros, *ibidem*, p. 25. Fig. 1
3. Lambros, *ibidem*, p. 27
4. Lambros, Paul. "Coins and Medals of the State of the Ionian Islands 1801-1807" in *North American Journal of Numismatics* 5, 1967, pp. 53-58, 91-94 and 6, 1967, p. 203-208. The coins are illustrated in p. 204 of the last section. For the *Dalmatia et Albania* type of gazetta see *NAJN* 5. 1967. p. 29. note 9.

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(THE TURTLE)

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Ancient Coins, Dealers and Advertisements: Some Statistics

by Lewis Henry

A few years ago the collector of ancient coins faced some unenthusiastic dealers at coin shows and conventions. "Yes," they answered when asked for ancients, "look in this box or my 'junk' tray."

At that time the numismatic trade was orientated toward the "rare" Lincoln cents, nickels, etc. The books offered by these dealers were "red, blue, black, green, yellow, and a rainbow of other colors." Silver dollars and U.S. Gold were the "premium" pieces offered. But by the end of 1967 this situation had changed. We who are interested in ancients have noted a growth in this area of numismatics, but only now have we compiled some statistics to prove our suspicions.

Taking in hand the February 1968 issue of the *Numismatist*, the official publication of the ANA, we note that the advertising section, including the inside front, inside back and back covers comprises 84 pages. Editorial matter, including the front cover occupies 62 pages, making a total of 43% editorial and 57% advertising matter.

Picking an earlier edition of the same periodical for comparison at random, we found that the December 1963 issue carried 91 pages of advertising and 55 pages of editorial matter giving us 62% advertising and 38% editorial material.

Breaking down the advertising into categories the following comparisons may be noted.

	December 1963 Total Advertisers: 165	February 1968 Total Advertisers: 184
U.S. Coins, paper money, etc.	82	72
World Coins	27	43
Supplies and related articles	18	32
*ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL COINS	2	14
*NUMISMATIC LITERATURE	14	14
Miscellaneous	14	0
Loans, Investments, etc.	3	9
Tokens, Medals Fantasy	5	5

The reader can note at a glance the decrease in U.S. coin ads and the increase in advertising of world coins and ancients. The increase in the number of supply ads would indicate that we are in the period of organization (or re-organization?) in the life of the average collector. The unchanged

number of numismatic literature ads indicates a stable and continued interest in reading and reference materials. But here the statistics do not tell the entire story for in the 1963 ads most of the books offered were on American coins, while in 1968 only 25% of the books were on U.S. coins. The rest reflect the growing interest in world coins, medieval and ancient coins. We believe that these figures make it easy to understand and realize that the age of filling holes from pocket change has passed. Collectors are now seeking information and education from their hobby and these guide them to the areas of numismatics which are less crowded and unstudied. A look at the contents of the last year's issues of the NAJN supports this statement.

Now you may ask why the advertising section of the NAJN has not become larger than it was two years ago. The answer is a simple one. We have tried to carry the advertising only of those dealers whose policies are ethical and who have a good working knowledge of ancient and medieval coins. Therefore it has been necessary to refuse the advertisements of some dealers and to discontinue others when the dealer did not serve our readers promptly and fairly. Since the NAJN is published for serious numismatists and collectors who need an educational forum and medium of communication, we have attempted to guarantee that all who advertise in it are willing and able to serve these readers in the best possible way. In short, the NAJN is not organized as a profit-making commercial enterprise, but as an aid to the study and collecting of ancient and medieval coins.

However, you will have noted in the last few months some new names among our advertisers, and if we may judge from the growing number of dealer applications, when approved, there will soon be many more. When new advertisers appear in these pages, you may be assured that their integrity is without question and that you will be treated fairly by them.

Now, if we may be permitted a prediction, more dealers in ancient coins will be needed within the next five years to supply the demand. The most logical candidates are those who are presently interested in ancients. The ACCA and NAJN would like to assist any collector who wishes to enter the field of selling ancient coins, both with advice and moral support. If you are an ACCA member and wish to sell your duplicate coins to other members, but need suggestions or help in any way, please write and we shall do our best to be

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies. (Oxford 5-10 September 1966) Edited by J. M. Hussey, D. Obolensky, S. Runciman. Oxford 1967. $23.00.

The very fact that we have in print only a year after the 13th International Congress of Byzantine Studies its Proceedings may be considered a contemporary miracle. The entire volume, containing papers by nearly every world authority on Byzantine history and civilization, is a reference work of immense value for all interested in the Eastern Empire. The numismatist can benefit from almost every paper, but especially from those in the numismatic section (pp. 315-341, + 1 plate). Short reviews of these papers appear here for the benefit of our readers interested in Byzantine numismatics.

BYZANTINE COINAGE AS SOURCE MATERIAL by Philip Grierson (pp. 317-333)

Grierson, addressing his paper to a group of scholars primarily specializing in areas of Byzantine studies other than numismatics, underlines the significance of coins as auxiliary sources of history. It is an excellent paper, possibly one of the few to date which has spelled out our shortcomings in our knowledge of the coinage of this Empire. In the section in which the identification of mints is discussed, Grierson expresses his doubts on the results of Metcalf's efforts to identify sylistically the die varieties of the follis corresponding to different mints during the reign of Theophilus (829-842). He examines the historical significance of coin finds both in the area once occupied by the Byzantine Empire and beyond its frontiers, ending with a plea for more analyses and interpretations of coin finds, underlining the dangers of "premature generalisations."

The select bibliography 1956-1965 which follows (pp. 326-333) is a good working list, but is by no means complete. It is divided into seven sections of which the first is devoted to General Works. In my opinion this is the weakest. He seems to be unaware of the many basic references on Byzantine coinage which have been reprinted in these years and has overlooked many excellent articles which have appeared other than in numismatic journals, i.e. art, economics, medieval studies publications, etc.

EPIGRAPHY OF THE BYZANTINE COINAGE by A. R. Bellinger. (pp. 335-338)

This article by Bellinger appears to be a dwarf wearing a giant's hat, the title being the hat. Not only does the author appear to be mixed up about what Byzantine numismatic epigraphy actually is, but he has failed to divide and understand the structure of inscription formulae in the Latin, Romaic and Greek periods in Byzantine coinage. The highlight is a "new reading" and interpretation of the coin inscriptions on the solidi of Leo IV (775-780 A.D.) which seems to be, by no means, verified by the letters readable on the coins (see *NAJN*, March 1968 issue). Even as a basic survey, this paper cannot justify its title, but it is nevertheless useful for one who wishes to get an idea of what is believed by the earlier generation of numismatists about the inscriptions of the Byzantine issues.

IL TITOLO DEGLI IPERPIRI DELLA ZECCA DI NICEA by T. Bertelé (pp. 339-341)

Based on information from the historian Pachymeres (*Andronicus Palaeologus* VI, 8) on the fineness of the gold issues of the empire of Nicaea, Bertelé proceeds to the study of the coins themselves and for the first time in the history of Byzantine numismatics, divides and attributes them in the correct reigns. The paper is accompanied by a plate illustrating the types of gold issues to be identified with the reigns of John III Vatatzes (1222-1254), Theodore II Lascaris (1254-1258) and Michael VIII Palaeologus (1259-1261). An absolutely indispensable reference for those writing on Byzantine numismatics. A. Barozzi.

Christ, Karl. *Antike Numismatik. Einführung und Bibliographie.* Darmstadt 1967. 107 pp. $5.00.

The author has produced the most comprehensive and invaluable introduction to ancient numismatics in an easy to read and use volume, which hopefully will soon appear in an English edition. Both for the student of the ancient world and the collector of ancient coins, this book is an absolutely essential reference, not only for the carefully selected bibliographical notes which accompany each section and chapter, but also for the system of classification of the material in it which helps the reader to understand what the real meaning is in the study of ancient numismatics.

Christ's *Antike Numismatik* is divided into five sections. I. General introduction II. Greek Numismatics; III. Hellenistic Numismatics; IV. Roman Numismatics. In the fifth section, under the title "Special Research" he examines the importance of coin finds and forgeries in the study of ancient numismatics. Every collector of ancients should have this book, even if he does not read German, if only for the sake of the bibliographical entries. John Emerson McCarthy.

NUMISMATIC LITERATURE. No. 79. December 1967. The American Numismatic Society. New York 1968.

This is the second issue of *Numismatic Literature* since it became a semi-annual publication. It is apparent that the new editorial administration faces many problems in recording not only what is published in numismatic articles journals and books, but the many publications related to numismatics published both in the U.S. and abroad. On the other hand, a great number of ephemeral and inadequately researched "write-ups" from dealers' lists and newspapers are listed (especially in the sections of Great Britain and the United States) without any apparent good reason.

Numismatic Literature has also discontinued the listing of fixed price lists and auction catalogues. We agree about the price lists, but believe that a true auction catalogue is bibliographically important, especially in the field of ancient coins where unpublished coins may often be found. The answer to this problem is difficult but it does not appear logical that on the one hand we consider it unimportant to list bibliographically the auction catalogue of a world famous collection attracting international attention and on the other we devote six lines of abstract to a paper examining what might have been a medal painted as a detail of Rembrandt's 'portrait' of Aristotle.

Our advice is simple. Let *Numismatic Literature* be a research tool

simply giving bibliographical references and one line abstracts where the title is not sufficiently indicative of the subject matter. Long summaries by the author or someone who has read the book are not really necessary here, once the pertinent bibliographical material has been given. After all, the numismatist who needs to use the material of the book or article will gain nothing from the abstract. He must, in the end, go to the work itself with its illustrations, footnotes, etc. To solve the problem once and for all of good abstracts and bad, the space would be best used simply to print *complete* bibliographical information, thereby permitting the inclusion of much more information and simplifying the editorial work involved. And finally, in this period of ever-increasing interest in building libraries among numismatists, we wonder that *Numismatic Literature* does not inform its readership what new appears in reprints and updated reissues so that numismatists will know of the availability of many once-rare books. John Emerson McCarthy.

LaBaume, Peter. *The Romans on the Rhine.* Bonn 1968. Paper. 82 pp. + 52 illus. (U.S. distributors. Argonaut Inc. Publishers. Chicago)

The historian and the numismatist now have for the first time an excellent book in the English language examining the Roman Imperial remains in Germany. Written by an archaeologist and historian now on the staff of the Roman-Germanic Museum in Cologne, this is not only a thoroughly researched monograph, but also a book which can give the general reader the pleasure of reading of history and archaeology of the Roman Rhine with the ease of reading fiction. The carefully selected illustrations not only give a very good idea of what buildings and monuments remain from the Roman period, but a good deal of information about every day life in the Roman military camps and the first colonies and forts. Highly recommended to numismatists who are interested in the frontiers of the Roman Empire.

(For medievalists, a companion volume in the same series is forthcoming, entitled *Castles on the Rhine*). John Emerson McCarthy.

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